



Congressman Tim Bishop

FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK

NEWS RELEASE

JUNE 18, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BISHOP ANNOUNCES \$2.3 MILLION FOR FIRE ISLAND

Funds to be Used to Improve Sailors Haven Marina and Ferry Dock, Dredge Channel

Washington, DC—Congressman Tim Bishop today announced \$2,374,000 to replace the Sailors Haven Marina and Ferry Dock and to dredge the entrance channel. The marina, which is part of the Fire Island National Seashore, is used to ferry visitors to the Sunken Forest, one of Fire Island's premier attractions. The marina is in desperate need of repair.

Bishop worked to include the funds in the Fiscal Year 2005 Interior Department Appropriations Bill, which passed the House on Thursday night by a vote of 334 to 86.

"Fire Island National Seashore is a world-class resource and these funds will ensure it continues to offer world-class services," Bishop said. "This is part of my continued effort to deliver federal funds to protect and enhance Long Island's vital resources."

Without repair and replacement of the marina and ferry dock, the National Park Service, which administers Fire Island, is concerned that the facility could become unusable. Already, there are safety concerns that the marina and ferry dock are structurally unsound, with loose planking and inadequate loading and unloading ramps.

Sailors Haven is the access point for the Sunken Forest, which is one of the last remaining maritime forests on the eastern seaboard. This local destination spot earned its name because it appears lower than the surrounding water. The Sunken Forest consists primarily of American holly, sassafras, and shadblow. Some trees are estimated to be well over 200 years old.

"The Sunken Forest is a natural wonder in our own backyard," Bishop said. "I want to make sure that Long Islanders continue to have access to the forest and all the natural beauty of Fire Island."

"This project will make access to, and use of the Sailors Haven marina safer and more enjoyable for park visitors," Fire Island Acting Superintendent Barry Sullivan said. "Sailors Haven marina is the access point for the Sunken Forest, one of the oldest remaining maritime holly forests preserved along the Atlantic Coast."

Although these funds passed the House today, they still must be approved by the Senate, and then signed into law by the President. Fiscal Year 2005 begins on October 1 of this year.

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